

House Concurrent Resolution No. 98

(By Delegates Morgan, Craig, Stephens, Sobonya, Reynolds and C. Miller)

[Introduced February 23, 2011.]

“Recognizing the Mighty Wurlitzer Pipe Organ in the Keith-Albee Theatre as the Official Theatre Pipe Organ in the State.”

WHEREAS, The original Wurlitzer Theatre pipe organ has been returned to the Keith-Albee Theatre and is the sole remaining theatre pipe organ installed in its original Theatre in the State of West Virginia; and

WHEREAS, This surviving Theatre organ was originally built and installed in the Keith-Albee Theatre in 1928 when the structure was first built, and is an historic survivor of 83 years; and

WHEREAS, The Theatre organ is a uniquely American musical invention, designed and constructed to provide sound and accompaniment in the silent era of motion pictures; and

WHEREAS, Between 1910 and the 1930's, there were nearly 7,000 Theatre pipe organs across the United States performing each day for motion pictures; and

WHEREAS, Soon after sound came to motion pictures, the Theatre organs were abandoned, discarded, given away, or left to languish dormant in their Theatres, leaving at the present time approximately 125 Theatre organs in public venues nationally, and only 40 remain in their original theatres; and

1 WHEREAS, in 2001, the Huntington Theatre Organ Project, Inc., a not-for-profit, tax-exempt
2 West Virginia Corporation consisting of private citizens was established to renovate and install a
3 Theatre pipe organ in the Keith-Albee Theatre in Huntington, West Virginia; and

4 WHEREAS, The Huntington Theatre Organ Project, Inc., has obtained parts of the Moller
5 Theatre pipe organ originally installed in the Smoot Theatre, Parkersburg, West Virginia and the
6 Granada Theatre in Bluefield, West Virginia, which will be added to the original Theatre pipe organ
7 installed in the Keith-Albee Theatre; and

8 WHEREAS, The glorious, majestic sounds of the most powerful musical instrument ever
9 produced will once again thrill West Virginians in such events as mini-musical concerts between
10 movies, Marshall University Artists Series, an annual concert series, and educational curriculum
11 programs with area schools and universities; and

12 WHEREAS, The Theatre pipe organ installed in the Keith-Albee Theatre is the only remaining
13 Theatre pipe organ built for a Theatre in the Great State of West Virginia and the glorious, majestic
14 sounds of the most powerful musical instrument ever produced will once again thrill West Virginians
15 in such events as mini-concerts between films, and annual concert series, and educational curriculum
16 programs with area schools and universities; therefore, be it

17 *Resolved by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

18 That the Mighty Wurlitzer Pipe Organ in the Keith-Albee Theatre be hereby designated as
19 the Official Theatre Pipe Organ for the State of West Virginia; and, be it

20 *Further Resolved,* That the Clerk of the House of Delegates forward certified copies of this
21 resolution to the Huntington Theatre Organ Project, Inc., the Director of the Division of Culture and
22 History, and the American Theatre Organ Society.